



Cultivating the Curious Mind

Mindfulness is the foundation skill for the **Rewire** workshop. Though simple in concept, it is challenging in practice. We often function on automatic pilot. There is an event in our lives impacting our emotional life, and we react in specific ways. When it comes to coping with our emotions and thoughts, it is beneficial to learn the skills of breaking away from being on automatic pilot. When we start this journey, we encourage ourselves to watch our thoughts and emotions with curiosity.

Although meditation is a formal way to practice mindfulness, it is also beneficial to practice mindfulness and integrate it into one's daily routines. The objective is to come present into the moment and then, without judgment, notice and acknowledge what one is feeling, thinking, or doing. In Rewire, we address the natural obstacles to this practice as well as the benefits of approaching this practice with perseverance and self-compassion.

Think of mindfulness as growing the observing brain. There is a crucial pause that occurs when we allow ourselves to be more attuned to our inner world. If we consider that thoughts and emotions are a kind of unbridled energy, inserting our observing brain allows us to make different choices. It is exciting to hear someone talk from a place of curiosity and sometimes awe. They begin to make connections between thoughts or emotional states and subsequent behavior. Noticing things about themselves is the essence of increasing self-awareness. Perhaps they realize that they lash out when feeling vulnerable. Someone may notice how they turn to food, drugs, or alcohol when too many emotions come at them. Noticing our unique patterns without judgment allows us to stay more open to change. It takes courage and persistence to be on this journey. Although difficult work, the reward is developing a life where one responds versus reacts to a challenging situation. With consistent practice, individuals can live a life with more clarity and more authenticity. They will suffer less and enjoy healthier relationships.

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